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SIPDIS, SENSITIVE
NSC FOR KARA MCDONALD

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: UNSC INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEBRUARY 26 CONSULTATIONS
ON MIDDLE EAST

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Mission is instructed to draw from the points in para. 2 below in discussing events in the Middle East during the consultations to be held Tuesday morning, February 26 in the UN Security Council.

[¶2.](#) (U) Begin points:

The United States is committed to the process begun at Annapolis, and we continue to work to support progress on four tracks: implementing the Roadmap, building economic and institutional capacity, encouraging regional support, and promoting bilateral negotiations between the parties. I'd like to focus on some of the progress that has been made so far.

On implementation of the Roadmap, General Fraser, who leads the U.S. effort to monitor progress on Roadmap implementation, has just returned from his second trip to the region for meetings with the parties.

On the capacity building track, we are looking forward to the planned conference in Bethlehem in May that will discuss public-private partnerships, with an intent to attract investment in the area. The conference that Germany recently offered to host will focus on increasing investment for capacity building in the Palestinian justice sector. Both events reflect the determination of the international community to support the parties' efforts and help lay the foundation for a two-state solution to this conflict.

On the bilateral negotiations track, both parties are committed to this process and we would like to applaud the vigorous discussions that are underway, as well as discourage any actions that could prejudice final status discussions. We urge Israel and the Palestinians to work to improve conditions on the ground and build confidence.

We remain concerned about the humanitarian plight of the Gaza Palestinians who continue to suffer under the Hamas regime which gained control as a result of an illegal coup against the legitimate institutions of the Palestinian Authority. The rockets and mortars being fired into Southern Israel are unacceptable and must stop. We welcome the ongoing dialogue between Egypt, Israel and the Palestinians on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and stress the importance of working to support their efforts to find a solution that: (1) ensures Israeli, Palestinian and Egyptian security, (2) meets the humanitarian needs of the Gazans, (3) puts the legitimate Palestinian Authority in control of Gaza borders and crossings, and (4) works to bring about conditions that will allow for the implementation of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and

Access.

The United States continues to provide basic humanitarian assistance to Palestinians living in Gaza via ongoing USAID programs and annual UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) contributions. In FY 2007, we contributed over \$154 million to UNRWA.

Turning to Lebanon, last week marked the anniversary of the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri. To demonstrate our commitment to promote justice in Lebanon, Secretary Rice announced that the U.S. intends to double

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its contribution to the Lebanon Tribunal from \$7 million to \$14 million, subject to the necessary Congressional notification procedures. We welcome the Secretary General's statement of February 13 announcing the establishment of the Management Committee and outlining the steps that have been taken to make the Tribunal a reality. The U.S. hopes the Tribunal will help deter further political assassinations, end an era of fear for Lebanese citizens and impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes, and help protect the sovereignty of Lebanon. We urge all states to show their support for the Tribunal by making a contribution to fund future years' operations. Even symbolic contributions are useful signs of the support of the international community for Lebanon.

I would also like to recognize that Lebanon's parliament had been scheduled to meet today, February 26, to elect a new president for Lebanon. The United States continues to support immediate presidential elections in Lebanon, held without foreign interference and precondition. It is unacceptable that Syria, Iran, and their allies continue to interfere in Lebanon's political process and to block the election of a new President. Their actions are destabilizing and threatening to Lebanon's security and to that of the region. Until such time as a new president takes office, the United States has full confidence in the legitimate Lebanese Government in managing the affairs of the state and in the Lebanese Armed Forces in continuing to provide security.

RICE